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# Afghan Agricultural Research and Extension Development Program (AGRED)



Monthly Report

APRIL 2013

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## Afghan Agricultural Research & Extension Development Program (AGRED)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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April represents another high activity month for AGRED. Priority has been placed on close coordination with MAIL and other donor programs as key program documents are developed and rolled out.

Early April brought together senior management from MAIL, USAID and ROP for the On-budget Workshop. This launch of the On-budget process outlined for all participants the flow of funding, and began discussion of the Strategic Goals and associated benchmarks that will be the guiding criteria for release of funds.

The MAIL On-budget Implementation Plan was circulated among MAIL and USAID stakeholders late in March and comments were received throughout April. Coordination on finalizing this document will be critical to the success of AGRED.

Also, a significant accomplishment was the finalization of the AGRED MOU. The MOU was signed by both MAIL and USAID to establish clear roles and responsibilities for the AGRED program on-budget component. The long awaited document will help to facilitate a number of relationships with this official endorsement of the program from both MAIL and USAID.

Development of mini-proposals has continued with projects designed for Kunduz, Kandahar, Helmand, and Kabul. AGRED Women Extension Coordinators are working with DAILs to ensure women's participation in the mini-proposal process. AGRED and AAEP worked on a coordinated process for those DAILs where both programs are operating. A joint training for proposal writing was held in late April.

AGRED M&E has completed the baseline survey with data being cleaned and aggregated late in the month.

# ACHIEVEMENTS IN APRIL

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## RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

### PRIORITIES

- Participation in the Farmers' Celebration Day in Logar Province.
- Attend Coordination, sectorial and technical meetings in central, regional, provincial and district levels with MAIL extension, DAIL directors and staff, PRT/USAID, PHDP/ANDO and with Agricultural faculty.
- Work on MAIL National Research strategy.
- Conduct baseline survey for the farmers and herders needs assessment jointly with AGREED M&E department.
- Conduct technical training for DAIL staff.
- Plot Demonstration development of the approved projects.
- Draft proposal for MAIL work plan budget.
- Coordination meetings and working with MAIL Gender and Home Economics Departments.
- Include Regional Women Extension Coordinators in proposal writing workshop.
- Meet with women extension coordinator with Ag faculties, Ag Institute and Ag High Schools.
- Participate in Sectorial working group (SWG), TWG, MAIL partners, MAIL HR meetings.
- Draft a scope of work on establishing Women in Agriculture Working Groups at regional and provincial level.
- Work with DAILs Home Economics and DoWAs to identifying women for trainings.

### ACTIVITIES

#### **Participation in the farmers celebration day:**

In April 2103, AGREED received an invitation from the Logar DAIL to participate in the event arranged to celebrate Farmer's Day. AGREED REC for eastern region delivered AGREED related information to the audiences. Meanwhile, DAIL staff received updates on mini projects identified through the stakeholder workshop conducted in Nov 2012. This participation and meeting with DAIL staff resulted in updating DAIL and other participants on AGREED activities and identified mini projects. Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai was the guest of honor for this event.



### **Coordination Meetings with DAIL directors on regional and provincial levels:**

To coordinate with DAILs of Kandahar and Kunduz concerning AGRED activities, AGRED met with DAIL directors on 27 of April 2013. Goals included:

- Inform participants of approved extension proposal for corn.
- Discuss the Research Farm's Water Management.
- Discuss the DAILs' staff capacity building in extension and research related activities.
- Develop a list of provincial level priorities.
- Selection of demo plots and beneficiaries.
- How and where to use off-budget and on-budget.

DAILs' directors received updates on AGRED and information concerning Off and On-Budgets. DAILs' directors offered their full support to implement the approved mini projects in target areas.

The approved mini project of improved corn varieties (hybrid) in Kandahar was translated into the Pashtu language and submitted to Kandahar DAIL's director and target district Extension Manager. This translated version supports the extension manager in implementing the project while building his capacity to write proposals.

### **Coordination and technical meeting with MAIL staff:**

The AGRED technical team developed the concept of mini research projects on 11 cultivars of commercial grapes (Red Globe, Parlet, Fantasy, Flame Seedless, Black Emerald, Thomson, Robby, Tashkent, Rabbier, Crimson Seedless & Exotic Red Globe) for the Kabul Research Farm in Badam Bagh, Kabul.

AGRED arranged a meeting on April 4th, 2013, with the MAIL Research Directorate. They presented the commercial grape research concept to the MAIL Director of Research. The concept was shared with Badam Bagh research and horticulture staff on April 8th. AGRED representatives presented the specifications for the research plots, for the 11 new improved commercial varieties of grapes as well as implementation methodologies and responsibilities for both AGRED and DAIL's staff.

These meetings resulted in the acceptance of the mini project and the Kabul DAIL and horticulture departments offered their full support to implement this activity.

### **Participation in invited workshops from USDA and Govt :**

On April 6<sup>th</sup> AGRED PEC for Maidan Wardak province participated in the workshop sponsored by Anti-Narcotics department of Maidan Wardak Province. The main topics of the workshop included pruning, orchard layout and the long term negative impacts of poppy cultivation on food security. The AGRED PEC learned pruning and fruit trees layout techniques. In addition, the team gained valuable information on the detrimental effects of poppy cultivation.

On April 16<sup>th</sup> 2013, AGRED Logar PEC participated in the USDA Small Business Workshop in Pul-e-Alam Logar province. The USDA advisor delivered the presentation on the importance of small businesses in Afghanistan.

The AGRED staff will deliver knowledge gained in these workshops to other PECs for AGRED and DAILs extension and research staff in other provinces.

### **Conduct meeting with extension and research department :**

As per AGRED Work Plan, on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2013 RECs, AGRED Kandahar RRC and PECs met with extension managers and the general manager of services affairs of Kandahar DAIL.

During the meeting, the DAIL staff received instruction on AGRED goals, objectives and progresses made so far. The DAIL staff suggested some animal husbandry and other mini projects such as:

- Beekeeping and fishery
- Green houses and vegetable planting
- Water management
- Digging of tube wells
- Research on turkey
- Vine yard layout
- Demonstration plots
- Basics footpaths for research farms

AGRED staff explained the technical requirements for design and supplied information on suitable locations/environment and markets. The extension and research staff of DAIL shared interest in the mini project proposals closely related to extension and research reflecting the real needs of farmers and herders of the province (Kandahar, Urozgan, Helmand and Zabul).

### **Working on MAIL National Research strategy :**

AGRED participated in the coordination meeting held on April 17<sup>th</sup> in MAIL chaired by the DG of Extension, CIMMYT and ICARDA representatives; topics raised by the DG of Extension included developing a Research Strategy for MAIL. AGRED was requested and agreed to provide technical support to MAIL in writing the strategy. Two AGRED staff began work with MAIL team on data collection for the strategy. They have collected data and have prepared a draft outline, background, goals, vision, current situation of the research farms and key research strategic goals. This cooperation reflects close teamwork between AGRED and MAIL.

### **Participation in agriculture sectorial meeting:**

Monthly agriculture sectorial meeting at regional and provincial level were held from April 3<sup>rd</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>. AGRED teams participated in the meetings held in Kandahar, Kunduz, Faryab, Samangan, Juzja, Laghman and Kunar. The participants of the meeting included government

departments (DAIL, Economic, PRRD, DARSA, Labor affairs and education directorates), UN agencies (UNODC and UNAMA), national and international NGOs (SIKA, CHA, CHAMP, PHDP, GIZ, ACTED, Mercy Corps, ASPR, JIKA, SRO, CBCMP, AGRED, et. al.) and representatives and PRTs of respective provinces.

Agenda for these meetings;

- 1) Provide update on agriculture related projects
- 2) Overview of the last quarter projects' activities
- 3) How to encourage the projects representatives to participate in ATWGs meetings.

AGRED representatives provided the participants information about the following;

- Stakeholder workshops conducted to select agriculture priorities from the perspectives of DAILs directors in 7 AGRED regional offices.
- Conducted inventory and human resources surveys of 7 regional research centers and 26 extension centers.
- Drafted mini proposals of research and extensions activities in accordance with findings from the stakeholders' workshop.
- Baseline surveys in 9 districts of selected 7 regional offices of AGRED covering 900 households.
- Shared approved proposals and on going implementation of approved mini projects.

Participants were updated on all AGRED activities. The participants appreciated the activities and impact of AGRED in the regional offices.

### **Conduct baseline survey for the farmers and herders needs assessment**

See details in M&E section later in this document.

### **Coordination meeting with PRT/ USAID:**

The Kandahar AGRED team was invited to meet with Kandahar PRT on April 24<sup>th</sup> 2013. Representatives from Govt., NGOs, KPRT participated in the meeting. The discussion points focused on the agriculture sector and marketing related topics such as market access, transportation, value chains, climate change impact, weather patterns, agriculture practices, comparative advantage, wheat production, horticulture, and livestock enterprises.

AGRED delivered a presentation explaining On-budget and Off-Budget processes, AGRED program duration, program goals and objectives and outdoor/indoor trainings for DAILs and MAILs staff. The AGRED team answered all participant questions.

On April 2<sup>nd</sup> AGRED participating in a meeting chaired by USAID discussing the membership of farmers' Cooperative and identifying solutions for challenges farmers had faced.

April 13<sup>th</sup> AGRED organized a meeting and invited USAID representatives Bruce Bely, Masoud Sayar and Hal Garey. Hal Garey was introduced as Regional Representative of



Western region for USAID. AGRED regional coordinator briefed him on AGRED activities to date, and future plans for the Western region. The orientation aimed to support new representative and offer a full picture of AGRED, its goals and objectives and progress to date for the western region.

To improve coordination with USAID and partners, a meeting was conducted on April 1<sup>st</sup> with the IDEA-NEW, ADF, USAID and IWMP in the Balkh Province. It focused on the current agriculture situation in the northern region, the introduction of AGRED (On-Budget & Off-Budget) and the AGRED progress in the northern region. Information and data gathered from the meeting on the situation of agriculture in the northern region will help the AGRED northern team to draft mini project proposals and help meet real needs of farmers and herders of the northern region.

### **Conduct meeting with agriculture faculty:**

To expand AGRED cooperation and coordination with universities and institutes, REC northern region initiated a meeting on April 6<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> and invited Dean for Agriculture Faculty of Balkh University and teachers from Horticulture Dept. in AGRED office. Main topics of discussion focused on lack of research activities in Ag-Faculty, lack of demonstration plots and lack of coordination and coordination between DAIL, other concerned organization and AGRED.

To help remedy current issues AGRED bridged and connected Agriculture faculty with HLP and other organizations for further cooperation and coordination. The NHLP provided vegetables' seeds for field demonstrations as a result of the meeting.

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, AGRED met the Dean for Agriculture at the Vocational Institute of Balkh. REC Balkh introduced meeting participants to AGRED and its activities, as well as AGRED On Budget and Off-Budget components.

In the Paktya region, REC and Ghazni PEC met with Agriculture faculty of Ghazni University on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2013. AGRED introduced to the participants its progress and presented members of the Paktya region team to everyone. Ghazni Agriculture faculty director showed great enthusiasm for AGRED methodology and goals and confirmed his full technical support when required.

These meetings ended with a shared understanding of AGRED and the needs of the Universities and Research Institutes and in gaining the support, when possible, of universities and institutes for research activities of AGRED teams in the concerned regions and provinces.

### **Conduct meeting with district authorities and extension manager**

To increase close coordination and cooperation at district levels, the PEC Kandahar met the Arghandab district governor on April 15<sup>th</sup> to explain AGRED project goals, objectives and progress. The PEC Kandahar also discussed the mini project for corn and clarified roles of the three parties (Farmers, DAIL extension managers and AGRED team) responsible for the implementation of the project.

The governor's office advised the DAIL extension manager to identify suitable locations for corn demonstration plots per the criteria set in the mini project guidelines. A complete list of beneficiaries will be provided in a follow up meeting.

Meanwhile, Helmand PEC met the extension managers of Nad-Ali and Garemsir districts of Helmand provinces. Drafted corn mini project proposal was share with them and comments collected. The district extension managers offered their full support in implementation of corn mini projects.

### **Coordination meeting with PHDP/ANDO:**

To expand coordination with MAIL partners, Kandahar regional staff had a meeting with ANDO/PHDP on April 20<sup>th</sup>. The meeting discussed perennial horticulture crops. Participants suggested AGRED begin work on new varieties in Kandahar region. These projects will benefit the local people and farmer community.

New suggested perennial horticulture crops for south west region:

- New Date (palm) varieties
- Alternative cultivars of walnuts varieties
- Modern market quality varieties of Pistachio
- Apple varieties with low chilling periods
- Citrus varieties low temperature from -10 C°
- Cultivation of Roses for fresh market
- Research on sugar cane varieties
- Modern market varieties of Onab (jujube)

AGRED team will consider these suggested crops while developing and approving mini project proposals.

## **MINI PROJECTS**

### **Herat Wheat Trial Mini Project (mechanic method of weeds control)**

The Herat Wheat trial mini project began in late March 2013. A major activity was weed control, conducted from April 20-23. The methodology selected was mechanical control. Meanwhile; the plot went under irrigation for the second time on April 14<sup>th</sup> and again on

April 24<sup>th</sup>. AGRED REC, Herat PEC, and DAIL's research farm staff observed the three cultivated plots. Data was collected and recorded for project reporting purposes.

### **Cultivation of 11 new improved commercial grape varieties :**

After the laser leveling of the allocated land for 11 improved commercial grape varieties in Badam Bagh research farm, design and layout standard planting hole preparation, the AGRED team in cooperation with Badam Bagh Farm Manager, planted 120 root cuttings of 11 different varieties. The AGRED RRC for the Kabul region in close coordination with the farm research manager regularly observed the field, collected data from different phases of the project and recorded them.

### **Establishment of grape vineyard**

The MAIL Mechanization Director submitted a proposal to AGRED for land clearing and preparation, leveling, digging a tube well and establishing grape vineyard (four jeribs of land) for Kabul DAIL/Extension. AGRED reviewed the document, checked it for technical compatibility, sought comment by the Acting Director of Extension/MAIL. Upon AGRED revision, the proposal was sent to MAIL for their review and endorsement. The proposal was endorsed by MAIL and approved by AGRED COP. On April 30<sup>th</sup>, planting for the Tayfi grape variety began under the standard digging holes. The AGRED team in close cooperation with MAIL mechanization department implemented the project. The team irrigated the vineyard by line basin method. AGRED team regularly observes and supervises project implementation.

### **Drafting mini project proposals**

All regional team members working in close cooperation with DAILs are working to build the capacity of DAIL staff in drafting mini project proposals. In April, the AGRED and DAIL teams worked together to draft mini project proposals on corn, tomatoes, potatoes, mung-bean, watermelon, saffron and cumin. These drafted proposals await review at the provincial level, AGRED central level and by technical groups within MAIL for comments, inputs, endorsement and approval.

## **WOMEN EXTENSION PROGRAM**

The Women Extension Coordinator for AGRED met with the MAIL Gender and Home Economics Departments and have begun to work closely with the extension and research departments. They are reviewing documentation to ensure all extension and research projects are engendered along project guidelines to successfully accomplish AGRED gender empowerment goals.

Within the AGRED area of responsibility, the Regional Women coordinators met with Ag faculties, Ag Institutes and Ag High Schools to establish a technical link between DAILs and

these institutions regarding AGRED activities and how to earn their support in capacity development of women staff of DAILs. In addition, the AGRED women coordinators participated in TWG, MAIL partners', MAIL HR and sectorial working groups. These meetings focused on gender involvement in extension and research activities. Also, meeting with HR allowed data collection on percentages of women involvement at MAIL and DIALs levels in extension and research activities. The data collected will help AGRED women coordinators to quantify improvements made on current percentage levels.

AGRED Women coordinators worked with MAIL/DAILs Extension/Research at provincial levels to ensure Gender and Home economics departments take part in preparations of mini project proposals and actively include women farmer involvement as they implement mini projects in target provinces.

The AGRED Women Extension dept. initiated the drafting process of SOW's specific to women needs to establish Women and Agriculture Working Groups at regional and provincial levels. These technical working groups discuss the technical involvement of women in mini projects' implementation and strive to identify the real needs of women farmers and herders.

## CHALLENGES

1. Regional research coordinators are supervised by National Extension Coordinator rather than working under National Research Coordinator. Enacting of National Research Coordinators has recently solved this problem. These coordinators will closely supervise and monitor all AGRED research activities.
2. Security problems in some of remote areas create bottlenecks, hindering traveling to and from target provinces. To mitigate this, the team contacts via internet and phone calls.
3. Working with MAIL Research and Extension and Home Economics in country level is challenging, AGRED tries to coordinate closely and creatively in order to place MAIL research and extension in leading positions, supporting the idea of working directly with women extension and conducting research to address women farmer issues.
4. Low number of women as extension/research personnel in provincial and district levels positions complicated ease of access to women farmers at the provincial and district levels. AGRED women extension coordinators are working to identify women volunteers to act as focal points for extension and research in the 26 provinces and 50 districts targeted by AGRED.

## TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

### PRIORITIES

1. Provide technical training to DAILs staff out in AGRED target areas
2. Conduct a pre On-budget workshop at MAIL
3. Organize and Conduct On-budget workshop
4. Conduct orientation workshop for AGRED regional staff

### ACTIVITIES

#### **Conduct technical training for DAIL staff**

Improving the capacity of DAILs' staff remains a top priority for AGRED. Kandahar AGRED conducted training on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2013. Trainings attendees included four representatives from forestry and three representatives from Kandahar DAIL extension. Training topics focused on establishing nursery in green houses. Kandahar AGRED PEC delivered these topics:

- Different sizes of green houses for nursery and other cash vegetables crops.
- Soil provision and percentage of soil, sand and manure
- Introduction of different kinds of plastic bags and different decorates plants
- Design of nursery and filling of plastic bags by mixture of soils
- Planting of seeds in plastic bags
- How to use wood dust on upper plastic bags to keep the moisture
- Irrigation methods and how to use fertilizers in plastic bags
- Protection of nursery from animals

On April 3<sup>rd</sup> Zabul AGRED PEC held a one-day practical training for DAIL staff. Training subject centered on orchard establishment. Participants for this practical training included three representatives from extension and five local farmers. The topics covered under this training included proper use of planting board, orchard design, standardized digging holes for planting, distance between rows and plants and orchard irrigation methods .

The PEC Zabul organized on April 4<sup>th</sup>, practical informational trainings on lime sulfur. The training totaled eight attendees (DAIL Staff and farmers).

On April 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> PEC of Ghazni trained two DAIL extension officers on pruning and 10 local farmers on wheat seed cultivation.



## WORKSHOPS

### MAIL/AGRED On-budget Workshop

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, the on-budget workshop was held in the MAIL compound at Abdul Wakil Khan hall with participation from senior MAIL, USAID, NGOs, Donors, and MoF officials. The main objective of this workshop centered on developing common understanding of terms associated with on-budget, meaning of on-budget in the context of USAID's programs with MAIL, and roles/responsibilities of partners (USAID, MAIL, MOF) in the process. 110 attendees from MAIL, DAILs, USAID, AGRED, IWMP, AAEP, CBCMP and other agriculture partners took part. *(Complete report was provided and previously sent)*

Based on H.E. Minister Rahimi's instruction, on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, a pre-on-budget workshop was held in the MAIL compound in which senior official from various MAIL department participated. The Pre-Workshop, workshop, goals included discussing objectives of April 6<sup>th</sup> workshop and methodologies of implementation of the on budget process.

### Orientation workshop for AGRED regional staff

A need was identified to provide in-service training to AGRED staff. the purpose was to provide detailed orientation to AGRED regional Coordinators, AGRED management decided to organize a three days (8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> of April) orientation session for all regional research, extension and women's program coordinators. The aims of the orientation were as follows:

1. Introduce new COP of AGRED
2. Address regional problems and issues (program and operation)
3. Deliver presentations (program and operations)
4. Coordination and communication between provinces, regions and central level
5. Short briefing from AGRED COR, Mark Kelly on AGRED goals and program problems

This orientation session resulted in the out puts below:

- Staff received full information on AGRED clarification of previously unclear material.
- Discussion and solution of issues and problems to the central level.
- Staff received information on operational activities e.g. procurement, logistics, finance (Advance, clearance, salary and etc).
- Existing problems were identified and solutions suggested. Resource people assigned for each problem to follow up and find solutions.
- Several outstanding financial advances addressed and solutions suggested.

## **Mini Fund Proposal Writing Workshop**

AGRED in close coordination with AAEP designed, organized and held a Mini fund proposal writing workshop from April 29<sup>th</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup> 2013. Sixty members from different organizations, MAIL, DAILs, private sector groups, AGRED seven regions, AGRED and AAEP staff Kabul staff participated in workshop.

The topics covered in this workshop included:

1. What is a mini proposal and what are terms and conditions for accepting mini project proposal?
2. What processes are involved from initiating a mini project proposal to approval, implementation and closing a mini project?
3. What are the roles of different involved parties (MAIL, DAIL, AGRED, AAEP, FARMERS) in the designing and implementation of the mini projects?
4. What are differences in mini project processes between AGRED and AAEP?

The workshop consisted of three parts:

1. Presentation
2. Working groups
3. Question and answers

The workshop resulted in:

1. The attendees learned the correct methodology on how to start and implement mini projects
2. The participants identified differences in between AGRED and AAEP process for mini project enabling them to recognize and follow the required processes for each of the programs.
3. Participants gained new knowledge of how to develop a mini proposal.

All Regional Women Extension Coordinators from all seven AGRED regions participated in mini proposal writing workshop. This workshop enabled the women program coordinators to monitor and confirm that the mini projects followed and accomplished to engender goals. In addition, the women coordinators have begun developing women centric proposals.

## COMMUNICATION

### PRIORITIES

1. To draft and finalize March Monthly report for AGRED
2. To initiate work on drafting AGRED quarterly report
3. To fill the vacant position of communication officer

### ACTIVITIES

#### **Draft and finalize March Monthly Report for AGRED**

The Communication department is not currently staffed. Both members resigned and took position elsewhere. Communication activities, including this monthly report, have been absorbed by other staff. The HR department is recruiting replacement staff at this time.

#### **Initiation of work on drafting Quarterly report for AGRED**

To meet USAID Branding requirements, the AGRED team improved the quarterly report format. The new format covers all the information and data required by USAID.

#### **Fill the vacant position of communication officer**

Finding qualified communication officers has become challenging for the AGRED. To date, no qualified candidates have been identified to fill the positions. The AGRED HR team has expanded the search for qualified individuals.

### CHALLENGES

One of the challenges amongst the biggest ones Communications department faced is the resignation of AGRED communication manager. Currently there is neither a communication officer nor a communication manager for the department.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### PRIORITIES

1. Baseline study
2. Inventories reports
3. Capacity assessment report of MAIL M&E Directorate
4. AGRED verification methods for performance benchmarks

### ACTIVITIES

#### **AGRED Baseline study**

AGRED completed baseline data collection from 900 farmers (including 201 women farmers). Data was collected in nine sample districts and reviewed by the M&E unit before entering it to the database.

## **Inventory reports**

Detailed inventory reports for the following eleven centers were produced and shared with USAID during the reporting month.

1. Extension Center - Karna (Uruzgan)
2. Extension Center - Rodat (Nangarhar)
3. Research Center - Kunduz
4. Extension Center - MohmandDara
5. Extension Center - PashtonZarghon
6. Extension Center - Sorkhrod
7. Extension Center Tarnak – Kandhar
8. Research Center – Salarbagh
9. Extension Center Narang,
10. Extension Center KhasKunar
11. Extension center Hazare – Zabul

## **MAIL M&E Capacity Assessment Report (OCAT)**

Using the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT), AGRED undertook MAIL M&E capacity and system assessments. The team produced a comprehensive report on the assessment and shared the document with USAID for review.

## **AGRED benchmarks' verification methods**

M&E Unit worked closely with USAID and reviewed verification methods and indicators for performance benchmarks. The document remains under review by USAID.

## **Updated USAID's Afghan-Info Database**

During the reporting month, the M&E Unit updated USAID Afghan-Info database for the following information/docs:

- AGRED PMP
- Quarterly reports
- HR data
- Photographs
- PMP indicators

# ACTIVITIES FOR MAY2013

## RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

### PRIORITIES

- Participate in Agriculture Technical working Group (ATWG), PRT/USAID, PHDP, DAILs extension and research, and AAEP meetings.
- Implementation of the approved mini projects.
- Working on MAIL Research strategy
- Supervision of demonstration plots in Kabul Badam Bagh Farm
- Visit the seven research farms
- Draft mini project proposal for AGRED off budget in close cooperation with DAILs in the provincial levels.
- Initiate implementation of corn mini project in Kandahar.

### PLANS

AGRED team will participate in several meetings to strengthen coordination with MAIL, DAIL and other organization working in agriculture sector.

AGRED regional teams will stress attention to supervision of mini project implementation, in parallel to holding field days and practical training of the DAIL staff and local farmers.

As per request from the MAIL DG Extension, AGRED has assigned a team that is supporting the directorate in developing the Research Strategy for MAIL. The assigned AGRED team is collaborating with the involved departments within MAIL to collect further information and data required for the strategy development.

### ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES

- Security instability in the provincial and districts levels.



## TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

### PRIORITIES

1. Conduct short training on report writing to DAIL staff in Kandahar and Kunduz provinces
2. Conduct training on new cultivation methods of corn to DAIL staff in 3 districts of Kandahar
3. Conduct training on mini proposal writing for Takhar DAIL staff.
4. Complete the mini proposal workshop started on April 29<sup>th</sup>.
5. Conduct field day of wheat seed demonstration in Herat province.
6. Conduct field day of melon fly control in Kunduz province.

### PLANS

The research and extension department of AGRED plan to focus on delivering technical training to the DAILs staff at the provincial level. Along with this, AGRED will continue close work with DAIL and MAIL to in identifying their needs so that AGRED can assist efficiently in development of DAIL's ability to achieve their goals.

AGRED regional staff plans will continue to actively develop capacity for the involved DAIL staff through conduction of short classes and practical field trainings. AGRED staff gained knowledge on mini project proposal writing, which they plan to transfer to the DAIL research and extension staff in their provinces.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### PRIORITIES

1. Draft and finalize the AGRED Quarterly report (Jan-March 2013)
2. Fill the vacant positions within the department
3. Finalize and submit April monthly progress report for AGRED

### PLANS

For May 2013, the AGRED communication dept. plans complete staffing efforts and render the dept. fully functional. The communication team will strive to improve the quality of the progress reports by collecting increased program related data to exhibit technical improvements and progress of AGRED. Communication unit will provide a standard format along with guidelines on completion to all central and regional staff. This will help the department receive data for monthly progress report on time and in a standard format with higher quality.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### PRIORITIES

1. Baseline survey data entry
2. Develop detailed inventory reports
3. Develop performance indicators reference sheet
4. Submit the EMMP to USAID for review
5. Conduct five days long training for AGRED technical staff and MAIL M&E staff on M&E and performance benchmarks

### PLANS

**1. Baseline study:**

In May 2013, data entry of the baseline data will be completed. Once the data entry is finished, data will be reviewed for errors and analyzed. Report writing of the study may also start in May.

**2. Inventory reports:**

Detailed inventories reports of extension and research centers will continue in May 2013. AGRED expects the remaining eighteen reports will be completed and shared with USAID next month.

**3. Performance benchmarks verification methods:**

Performance benchmarks verification method documents will be finalized in May 2013. Once the document is completed, the M&E unit will produce Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) for each of the performance indicators. The document will be shared with USAID for review.

**4. EMMP:**

AGRED has produced a draft an Environmental Mitigation Monitoring Plan (EMMP) based on USAID's environmental assessment of AGRED. The document will be submitted to USAID for review.

**5. Training of AGRD/MAIL staff on M&E and performance benchmarks:**

The AGRED M&E unit has scheduled a five days long training for AGRED technical staff and MAIL M&E staff in May 2013. The training will cover the following content:

- M&E fundamentals

- Monitoring of AGRED off-budget activities
- On-budget performance benchmarks
- Needs assessments
- Data analysis
- EMMP

### AGRED Year-1 Target Provinces and Districts

#	Province*	Priority Districts
1	<b>Kabul</b>	Shakar Dara, Char Asyab
2	Bamyan	Bamyan
3	Ghazni	Ghazni Center, Khoja Omari, Jaghori
4	Kapisa	Khohistan 2 <sup>nd</sup>
5	Parwan	Charikar, Sayed Khil
6	Wardak	Maidan Shar
7	<b>Nangarhar</b>	Mohmand Dara, Kama, Sorkhrood, Rodat
8	Kunar	Narang, Khas Kunar
9	Laghman	Qargae
10	<b>Paktya</b>	Gardiz, Ahmad Aba
11	Logar	Mohammad Agha
12	<b>Kandahar</b>	Dand, Daman, Arghandab
13	Helmand	Nadali, Garmsir
14	Urozgan	Trinkot
15	Zabul	Qalat, Shahjoy
16	<b>Herat</b>	Gozara, Pashton Zarghon
17	Badghis	Qadis
18	<b>Balkh</b>	Nahre Shahi, Dehdadi
19	Faryab	Khoja Sabzposh
20	Jawzjan	Aqcha
21	Samangan	Aybak
22	Sar-i-Pul	Sancharak
23	<b>Kunduz</b>	Kunduz Center, Khan Abad
24	Takhar	Taloqan
25	Baghlan	Markazi Baghlan
26	Badakhshan	Kishim

**\*The seven initial target provinces are highlighted in bold**

## ACRONYMS

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AAEP	USDA Afghan Agricultural Extension Program
ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief
ADT	US Military Agriculture Development Team
AGRED	USAID Afghan Agriculture Research & Extension Development
ATWG	Agriculture Technical Working Group
CBCMP	USDA Capacity Building and Change Management Program
CHAMP	USAID Commercial Horticulture & Agricultural Marketing Program
COP	Chief of Party
CDC	Community Development Council
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
DoWA	Directorate of Women Affairs
EC	European Community
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IEE	USAID's Environmental Assessment
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
LOE	Level of Effort
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PHDP	Perennial Horticulture Development Program
PEC	Provincial Extension Coordinator
RADP	USAID Regional Agriculture Development Program
ROP	Roots of Peace
RRC	Regional Research Coordinator
REC	Regional Extension Coordinator
TAMU	Texas A&M University
UCD	University of California, Davis
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture



USG	United States Government
WSU	Washington State University
RRD	Rural Rehabilitation and Development
PDC	Provincial Development Council